

An Introduction to the Gallery: *Shore, Forest and Beyond*



Emily Carr
War Canoes, Alert Bay, 1912
oil on canvas

Collection of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa

TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE FALL 2011

Vancouver
Artgallery

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Vancouver Art Gallery

Teacher's Guide for School Programs

Shore, Forest and Beyond is an exhibition of work from the private collection of **Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa**. Over several decades, Audain and Karasawa have amassed one of the most important private collections in the province—an extraordinary and rarely seen personal collection of historical and contemporary works by British Columbia's foremost artists. In the tour of *An Introduction to the Gallery*, students will have an opportunity to explore the Vancouver Art Gallery by way of a remarkable exhibition that occupies two floors of the heritage building.

DEAR TEACHER:

This guide will assist you in preparing for your tour of the Art Gallery. It also provides follow-up activities to facilitate discussion after your Gallery visit. Engaging in the suggested activities before and after your visit will reinforce ideas generated by the tour and build continuity between the Gallery experience and your ongoing work in the classroom. Most activities require few materials and can be adapted easily to the age, grade level and needs of your students. Underlined words in this guide are defined in the Vocabulary section.

The tour *An Introduction the Gallery* has three main goals:

- To introduce the Audain collection
- To explore the historical and contemporary artists of this province
- To examine artworks by individual artists within their particular contexts.

Background to the Exhibition

“Living with art has been one of the great joys of my life.”

Michael Audain

Shore, Forest and Beyond is the first major exhibition of one of the most important private art collections in the province. Over the last twenty-five years, Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa have assembled a remarkable collection of historical and contemporary British Columbian and Mexican art. Although Audain has said that they “have never acquired an object because it would help build a first rate collection,” the quality and range of work are of a consistently high standard and are among the strongest examples of work by each artist. One hundred and seventy works—two thirds of their personal collection—as well as works they have in the past donated to the Vancouver Art Gallery are included in this exhibition.

Reflecting a deep interest in the art and history of this region, the majority of the work is by British Columbian artists. The range of work includes historical Northwest Coast masks and other objects made for traditional purposes, to contemporary First Nations works, to paintings by Canadian modernists including B.C. Binning, Jack Shadbolt and Gordon Smith. Contemporary First Nations artists Brian Jungen, Dana Claxton and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun have strong representations of each of their particular art practices. Robert Davidson, working from within Haida traditions but creating innovative contemporary pieces far removed from ceremonial purposes, has several recent abstract pieces in this exhibition.

Emily Carr is especially well represented in this collection. The Audains have been concerned with representing work from every period of her artistic development. Early and late explorations, portraits, landscapes, sketches, watercolours and oils that span her entire career provide an extraordinary glimpse into one of the most important holdings of her works in the world.

The Audain Collection includes another major area of interest—Mexican Modernism, representing the most significant collection of this art in Canada. Numerous works by Diego Rivera, best known for his large-scale murals, is here represented by works depicting the struggles of everyday family life in Mexico. These are complemented by works by fellow Mexicans José Orozco, David Siqueiros and Rufino Tamayo.

Shore, Forest and Beyond: Art from the Audain Collection is organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery and curated by Ian Thom, Senior Curator Historical, and Grant Arnold, Audain Curator of British Columbia Art.

FIRST NATIONS ART & TERMINOLOGY: A Brief Introduction

Northwest Coast Art

Much of Northwest Coast art is representational: the images represent animals and figures from crests and stories. Formline is the continuous flowing line that outlines creatures and structures in a work of art. Artists use formline, ovoids and U-forms to create their designs, adhering to strict rules of composition that are passed down from generation to generation. The rules that guide formline design are consistent whether the subject is a human or an animal form, on a monumental totem pole or a goat-horn spoon handle.

Formline

“There are rules to go by . . . When I was working with Robert [Davidson], he explained that it was like learning to do the alphabet. He said, “If you don’t understand the alphabet, you can’t make new words.” It’s the same with Northwest Coast Art.”

Reg Davidson

“We say, the line has to look like it would spring apart if you touched it with a knife.”

Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas

Formline designs can be painted on panels, drums, chests, boxes, spruce-root baskets and hats; they are incised on totem poles, argillite sculpture and silver and gold jewellery; they are woven into decorative robes. In traditional women’s arts, formline is approached differently, through the more abstract patterns of cedar and spruce-root weaving.

Ovoids

- are traditionally convex on top, and slightly concave on the bottom, like a rounded rectangle or angular oval
- vary in thickness and length
- are commonly used for eyes and joints



U-forms

- are thick arches, with ends tapering to sharp points, similar to the letter *U*
- vary in proportion, and can be placed one inside another
- are often found in conjunction with other form elements
- are commonly used to depict appendages

Masks

First Nations masks and the design elements used to create them are cultural property, owned by the particular cultures to which they belong. The bold designs and forms used on the masks are distinctive of the Northwest Coast style of decoration. The painted and carved images on the masks utilize abstraction to represent animal, human and supernatural beings. The artists create complex images using the basic shapes of formline design.

A primary role of masks is that they make the supernatural world visible. Masks can also represent everyday people, particularly ancestors and the people who meet the supernatural beings. Masks have had essential functions in First Nations societies from the earliest times. They rarely appear alone, outside of ceremony. Every mask has a story and a dance associated with it. When the masks are danced in special ceremonies, such as the potlatch, the stories are told as a way to pass on information and to record history in the memories of those watching the performance. Traditionally, First Nations had an oral tradition through which they communicated their history, instead of a written tradition. The masks and dances help to preserve the values, status and responsibilities of their owners and makers.

Transformation Masks

The idea of transformation, in a symbolic and literal sense, is integral to much of traditional Northwest Coast thought and practice. Used in ceremony, transformation masks portray the spectacular metamorphosis of supernatural figures in oral histories.

Potlatch

“The potlatch ceremony is our supreme court where our laws are established and reaffirmed. The potlatch is a public forum where songs, which are inherited as property, are transferred and sung by their rightful owners. It is where the chiefs claim their position. It is where names, titles and social privileges are handed down to the rightful person through our mothers, since we are a matrilineal society. The potlatch, the very foundation of our culture, was outlawed, banned from our use.”

Robert Davidson

The Potlatch relates to social, spiritual, political and economic aspects of life. In the past, it was particularly important because First Nations languages were strictly oral. Through the Potlatch, Northwest Coast peoples ensure that their family and community histories are preserved and maintained. Potlatches vary for different Nations. Generally, a person of high rank hosts a Potlatch to mark important social, sacred, legal, political or family transitions. There is a great feast, speeches and dancing, and the hosts give away food, objects and money to all the visitors. The gifts symbolize the wealth of the hosts. In accepting these Potlatch goods, the visitors take on the responsibility of being witnesses. In an oral culture, there is no written record of property boundaries, fishing rights, treaties or marriages. As a result, the people who attend serve as the record. Their presence and acceptance of the gifts validates the claims of the host family. Potlatches were banned in Canada from 1884 to 1951.

Totem poles

Totem poles record the real and mythic histories of chiefly families and First Nations communities. They have many purposes: to tell stories, show land rights, celebrate marriages, remember the dead and welcome guests. The carved images on totem poles are crest figures. They show the animal, human and supernatural ancestors of a family. The rituals involved in constructing and erecting totem poles are ancient and complex. Totem poles are made of wood, usually cedar, and are carved by a master carver working with apprentices. Totem poles are often painted with bright, durable colour derived from plant and mineral sources. When erected, they are dedicated with a detailed account of the meaning and history of each figure depicted on the pole. They are then established through feasts and potlatches where guests are paid, with food and gifts, as witnesses to the host chief's claims.

ARTISTS' BACKGROUND

The following background information highlights some of the artists whose work we may explore in the school tour.

Emily Carr

"You will have to experiment and try things out for yourself and you will not be sure of what you are doing. That's all right, you are feeling your way into the thing."

Born in Victoria in 1871, Carr decided as a child that she was going to be an artist. She set herself on a path of learning that took her to California, England and France. On her return to Canada she travelled into the northern parts of British Columbia to paint First Nations subjects, and later into the forests of Vancouver Island to capture the landscape. She led an unconventional life for a woman of her time and background, never married, and supported herself by raising dogs, running a boarding house, making pottery, giving art lessons and other efforts. Under-appreciated an artist, she achieved some measure of success only toward the end of her life, and then she became known most significantly as a writer. She produced a series of books, including *Klee Wyck*, a collection of stories based on her experiences with First Nations people, which won the Governor General's Award for Literature in 1941. She died in Victoria in 1945.

During her time in France, Carr was strongly influenced by the styles of Post-Impressionism and Fauvism, which were new at the time. She returned to Canada excited about her new-found techniques, which included bright colours and broken brushstrokes—for which she was ridiculed and dismissed as a bad artist. Her paintings of First Nations villages in the north were further rejected as not being “true documentary”. After a long period of not painting at all, Carr returned to the landscape to paint the forests of British Columbia. These are among her strongest and most forceful works, where she developed her own modernist style of rich layered coloration and increasing abstraction.

The Audain Collection—the most important holding of her works in a private collection—documents Carr's journey as an artist, with works from every stage in her career. Amongst many other significant works are *Arbutus Tree, 1913–20*, *War Canoes, Alert Bay, 1912*, and *House with Slanted Roof-Brittany, 1911*.

Dana Claxton

"I'm influenced by my own experience as a Lakota woman, a Canadian, a mixed-blood Canadian, and my own relationship to the natural and supernatural world. That whole bundle of experiences goes in to the artwork."

Born in 1959 in Saskatchewan, Dana Claxton is Lakota First Nations. Her family, descended from Sitting Bull's followers, fled to Canada in 1876 to escape prosecution by the United States Army. The impact of history on the present circumstances of First Nations peoples plays a primary role in Claxton's work as both contemporary artist and educator. She has taught a wide range of courses including women's studies, media arts, broadcasting and critical thinking, at universities across Canada. She has directed and produced numerous television programs featuring First Nations perspectives. Claxton has worked closely with several Canadian and First Nations organizations. She curates exhibitions and frequently serves as an art juror and mentor for young and emerging artists. Claxton currently lives in Vancouver and teaches a variety of courses at the University of British Columbia ranging from Introduction to Drawing, to Theory in Contemporary Art Practice, to Performance Art.

Claxton's own artwork includes film and video, installation, performance and, most recently, large-scale photography. Her work is held in private and public collections across Canada and has been

screened internationally, from New York to Hong Kong. While Claxton's works always portray strong messages and beliefs—both political and personal—they are first and foremost powerful, visually arresting works of art.

Paint Up #1 is part of a recent series of striking large-scale colour images. A close-up of dancer Joseph Paul's face—painted in ceremonial black, white and red—confronts the viewer, unflinchingly returning our gaze.

Robert Davidson

"In reclaiming our culture, we gain strength. We gain a solid foundation from which to grow. In reclaiming our culture, we reclaim our identity. We have many threads connecting us to the past. My grandparent's generation was one of those threads, and when they come together, they form a thick rope. It is a thick rope that connects us to our culture, the values which we are reclaiming."

Born in Hydaburg, Alaska, in 1946, Robert Davidson lived his early years in the Haida community of Old Massett. The great-grandson of the acclaimed Haida artist Charles Edenshaw, Davidson learned to carve from his father and grandfather and was already an accomplished carver in his twenties. After apprenticing with the renowned Haida artist Bill Reid for eighteen months, Davidson went on to study at the Emily Carr College of Art and Design. In 1969, he carved a 12-metre totem pole for the village of Old Massett that was said to be the first significant pole raised on Haida Gwaii in more than ninety years.

Davidson expanded his skills to become a printmaker and to work in gold and silver. While remaining true to precise technical traditions of Haida art and to the legacy of Haida stories, Davidson has also established a distinct personal style, pushing and changing the classic Haida formline in innovative ways. A significant part of his life's work has been to pass on Haida traditional knowledge, and he devotes himself to reclaiming and teaching Haida songs, stories and visual art forms.

The Audain Collection includes many important masks and carvings by Davidson, including *Relaxed Symmetry*, which is a seemingly abstract image, composed of customary Northwest Coast elements such as eyes and fins. While continuing to use traditional forms, Davidson brings to his work a distinctly personal contemporary edge.

Brian Jungen

"The native tradition is to craft one object into another . . . it was kind of improvised salvaging born out of the practical and economic necessity, and it greatly influenced how I see the world as an artist."

Brian Jungen was born in 1970 in Fort St. John, BC. His mixed parentage—First Nations mother and Swiss father—has deeply affected his life and art. Since he graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design, he has lived in Montreal, New York and Vancouver. He has received numerous awards for his work, which has been widely acclaimed and exhibited internationally.

Jungen has used ordinary mass-produced objects such as running shoes and plastic chairs to create hybrid sculptures and installations. Much of his work explores the complicated realities of urban Native youth struggling to integrate traditions while living in a non-Native consumer society. But first and foremost we see Jungen as a conceptual artist using found materials to create unexpected and engaging contemporary artworks.

In *Variant 1*, Jungen transformed Nike Air Jordan trainers—themselves now collector's items—into a wall hanging that resembles a Haida artwork. In the process, he not only creates a powerful contemporary artwork, but also asks challenging questions about culture and values—both economic and moral.

Diego Rivera

“An artist is above all a human being, profoundly human to the core. If the artist can’t feel everything that humanity feels, if the artist isn’t capable of loving until he forgets himself and sacrifices himself if necessary, if he won’t put down his magic brush and head the fight against the oppressor, then he isn’t a great artist.”

Born in Mexico in 1886, Rivera began attending the San Carlos academy at the age of ten. He studied art in Spain and then lived in Paris, developing friendships with—and being influenced by—many of the major artists of the day, including Picasso and Modigliani. After studying the mural paintings of the Renaissance in Italy, he returned to Mexico to dedicate himself to the Mexican Revolution and to develop his signature work in the form of large-scale public murals. He firmly believed that art could and should be used to serve political ends and ideology. Always a controversial figure, he was an outspoken radical Marxist, friends with the Soviet Marxist thinker Leon Trotsky and twice married to the artist Frieda Kahlo. He died in Mexico City in 1957.

The majority of his murals were frescos painted in the style of social realism. They contained large simplified figures and a clear Aztec influence, and generally told stories glorifying the history of the people, most significantly the struggles of the working class. Many included leading personalities of the times. During the height of the Depression, Rivera was commissioned to paint some murals in the United States that caused massive controversy. The pro-Marxist sentiments expressed in his work, including a portrait of Lenin, were deemed offensively anti-American. He also made smaller paintings, using a range of media including oils, watercolour and the encaustic (wax) technique.

Maternidad (Motherhood), 1954, is a large painting that depicts a mother and three children at play in a distinctly domestic setting. The baby is holding a globe while another child feeds a white dove; a broken doll is splayed in the background.

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun

“I am an artist of two cultural circumstances. Since I happen to be a Native, I paint the colour of life; I see all this land, in a Native way. I was born to see it this way.”

Born in 1957 to a Cowichan Salish father and an Okanagan mother in Kamloops, BC, Yuxweluptun grew up in Richmond, BC, in a household filled with political activism. A graduate of Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design, he chose to train in the traditions of European art over traditional Native art, believing that this would better equip him to communicate his message to the largest possible audience. *Yuxweluptun* is a Salish word meaning “man of many masks.” The name was given to him during his initiation into the Sxwaixwe Society when he was thirteen.

While Yuxweluptun’s work often causes viewers to feel unsettled, it is very much about generating dialogue and awareness regarding First Nations issues and culture and the destruction of the natural environment. The socio-political content of his work is inspired by historical events, documents and treaties. He has chosen art as his way to give voice to his political concerns, believing that art can stimulate discussion between people from different—even opposing—cultures and belief systems.

His large-scale, intensely coloured canvases merge the ovoids and formlines of Northwest Coast traditional art with western art forms such as surrealism and abstraction. He sets his strong narratives within assorted landscapes—urban, natural and artificial.

Burying Another Face of Racism on First Nations Soil is a towering canvas containing Yuxweluptun’s signature brightly coloured First Nations figures literally burying racism.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Connecting the Artists (all grades)

Objective:

Students explore the lives of the artists: their work, influences, interests and points of connection.

Materials:

- ◇ the Internet; some useful websites:
www.wikipedia.com
<http://www.emilycarr.ca/>
Each artist can be Googled individually
- ◇ books on individual artists
- ◇ Artist Information Sheet and Student Worksheet (following pages)
- ◇ writing materials

Process:

1. Divide the class into six groups. Give each group the information on one of the artists (see Artist Information Sheet, next page).
2. Have the students read the information in their groups.
3. Clarify any terms students do not understand; e.g., First Nations, installations, abstraction (see First Nations Art & Terminology, page 6, and Vocabulary, page 18).
4. Have students use books and/or the Internet to expand their information and look at some examples of their artist's work—they should be able to describe one in detail.
5. Have each group talk about their artist, while the rest of the class fills in the worksheet (page 12).

Conclusion:

- Ask the students to comment on similarities and differences between the artists and their artwork.
- Do the artists have anything—e.g. materials, techniques, ideas, styles—in common?
- Do the artists have any practices, attributes or perspectives that might be described as particularly British Columbian or Canadian? If not, why? If so, how?
- Given the fact that Emily Carr was not First Nations, do students think she had the right to use First Nations ideas and objects in her artwork? Why or why not?
- Does Carr's perspective differ from the First Nations artists discussed here? How?

Artist Information Sheet

Emily Carr

- Born in 1871 and died in 1945, lived in Victoria, British Columbia
- Learned new ways of painting in England and France
- Lived mostly alone, kept lots of animals
- Painted First Nations villages and totem poles, and forest landscapes
- Works include: *Arbutus Tree, 1913–20, War Canoes, Alert Bay, 1912* and *House with Slanted Roof–Brittany, 1911*

Robert Davidson

- Born in 1946 in Hydaburg, Alaska, is Haida First Nations
- Learnt to carve from his father, grandfather and Bill Reid, and studied art at Emily Carr College of Art & Design
- Works in gold and silver, carves wood and is a printmaker
- Teaches traditional Haida songs, stories and art
- *Relaxed Symmetry* is a carving that mixes Haida traditions with his own personal style

Diego Rivera

- Born and died in Mexico, 1886–1957
- Began studying art as a child in Mexico, lived and studied in Spain, Paris and Italy
- Painted murals (and some smaller paintings) showing political struggles of the day
- Interested in painting the stories and activities of regular working people
- Married three times, twice to artist Frieda Kahlo
- *Maternidad (Motherhood), 1954*, is a painting of a mother and three children playing

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun

- Born in Richmond BC into First Nations family
- Studied at Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design
- Wants his art to change the way people think
- Uses traditional First Nations designs, but adds bright colours
- Paints stories of historical events
- *Burying Another Face of Racism on First Nations Soil* is a large, brightly coloured painting

Dana Claxton

- Born in 1959 in Saskatchewan, is Lakota First Nations
- Her ancestors were Sitting Bull's followers who escaped from the United States to Canada
- Has taught gender studies, media arts, critical thinking and journalism at many universities
- Works in film, video, photography, installation and performance
- *Paint Up #1* is a large colour photograph of a face painted in black, white and red

Brian Jungen

- Born in 1970 in Fort St. John BC to First Nations mother and Swiss father
- Studied art at Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design
- Uses everyday objects to make sculptures and installations
- His culture and background are important in making his artwork
- *Variant 1* is made from Nike trainers into a wall hanging that resembles a Haida artwork

Student Worksheet

	Personal details	Type of art & Description of an artwork	Influences and interests	Connections between artists
Emily Carr				
Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun				
Brian Jungen				
Dana Claxton				
Robert Davidson				
Diego Rivera				

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY: Emily Carr; Colours, Shapes & Trees (primary and intermediate)

Objective:

Students look at the ways painters make choices regarding colours, learn to mix different shades and tones of green, and use them to paint trees.

Discussion

Part 1: Colour

A brief review of colour theory would be helpful for most students to help them make informed decisions about using and understanding colour in painting. Students should not see colour as absolute; colours react and change in context and in contrast to one another.

- **Primary** colours: cannot be mixed from other colours; blue, red and yellow
- **Secondary** colours: mixed from two primaries; green, purple and orange
- **Tertiary** colours: mixed from two colours adjacent to each other on the colour wheel (one primary and one secondary); e.g., yellow-green, green-blue
- **Complementary** colours: opposite each other on the colour wheel, share no common colours; e.g. red (primary) and complementary green (made up of the primaries blue and yellow) provide maximum contrast and intensify each other
- **Analogous** colours: three colours next to each other on the colour wheel, all contain a common primary; e.g., yellow, yellow-green and green. Used to create harmonious compositions with subtle contrasts
- **Shades** : created by mixing colours with varying amounts of black
- **Tints**: created by mixing colours with varying amounts of white
- **Warm colours**: reds, oranges and yellows; tend to pop to the foreground of the picture plane
- **Cool colours**: blues, greens and purples; tend to recede to the back of the picture plane

Part 2: Emily Carr, Trees and the Forest

Emily Carr wrote in her journal:

“Sketching in the big woods is wonderful . . . Everything is green. Everything is waiting and still. Slowly things begin to move, to slip into their places. Groups and masses and lines tie themselves together. Colours you had not noticed come out, timidly or boldly. In and out, in and out your eye passes. Nothing is crowded; there is living space for all. Air moves between each leaf. Sunlight plays and dances. Nothing is still now. Life is sweeping through the spaces. Everything is alive. The silence is full of sound. The green is full of colour. Light and dark chase each other.”

“Cedars are terribly sensitive to change of time and light—sometimes they are bluish cold-green, then they turn yellow warm-green—sometimes their boughs flop heavy and sometimes float, then they are fairy as ferns and then they droop.”

- Carr needed to mix paint that could show the variety of tones and shades of colours found in natural environments, particularly in painting trees. Students can experiment with mixing colours to find out how many greens they can make.
- She also exaggerated her tree forms to create a variety of shapes and forms that became very abstract, although still recognizable as trees. Students can push to create trees that are circles, triangles, rectangles

Materials:

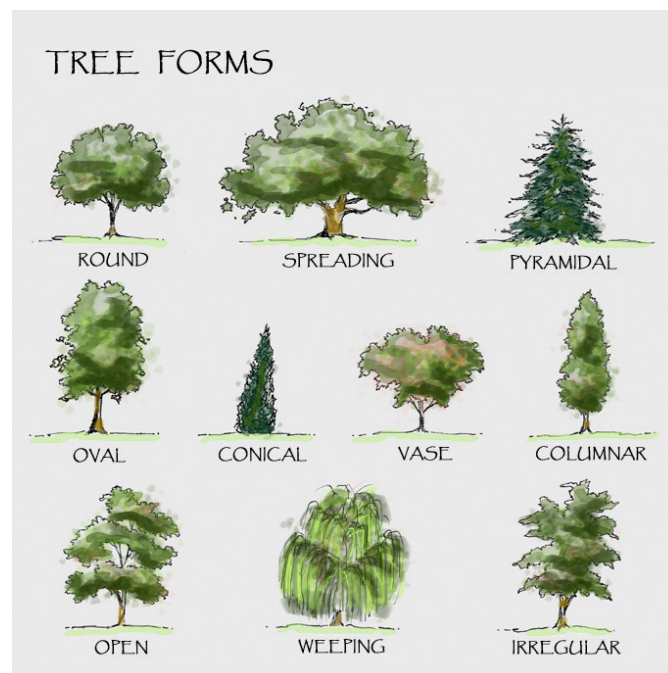
- ◇ 2 sheets of paper per student
- ◇ blue, yellow, white, black and red paint (tempera, acrylic or watercolour), paintbrushes
- ◇ reproductions of Emily Carr tree paintings
- ◇ images or diagrams of tree shapes (see example below)

Process:

1. Review colour theory in as much detail as necessary.
2. Read the above quotations from Carr's journal to the class. Discuss.
3. Have students mix small amounts of blue and yellow paint, and experiment by adding to their greens different amounts of black (to create shades) and white (to create tints) directly on the paper. Remind students to clean the paintbrush between colours.
4. How many greens are they able to make? Have the students make up a name for each colour and use a pencil to label the colours on the paper.
5. Show students examples of a variety of tree shapes (see examples below).
6. Have students paint a number of trees using the many greens they discovered. Encourage students to push their shapes to the point of abstraction—creating trees that are shaped like triangles, circles, ovals or rectangles.
7. Have students use small amounts of red to highlight, outline or emphasize a part of their painting.

Conclusion:

- Display and talk about the students' work.
- Discuss the effects of the complementary colour (red) and analogous colours (blues, greens and yellows) in bringing attention to different areas of their paintings.



POST-VISIT ACTIVITY: Art, Ideas & Inspiration (intermediate/senior)

Objective:

Students explore some of the artists' ideas and motivations for making art and consider their own sources of inspiration.

Discussion:

These artists' backgrounds and beliefs are central to their art-making process. They have been shaped and inspired by the events and conditions of their lives and cultures.

- **Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun** is politically motivated and consciously works to change the perceptions of viewers through his art
- **Diego Rivera** believed that art should be in the service of the people, particularly the working class, and had the power to change society.
- Artist/educator **Dana Claxton**'s art reflects and questions the nuances and subtleties of traditions, race and gender in a charged and changing world.
- **Robert Davidson** believes it is his duty to preserve and teach his culture, and creates work that is simultaneously traditional and innovative.
- **Brian Jungen**'s inspirations and influences come directly from the culture and traditions he was raised with. He talks of repurposing and reusing, creating things that are new and different even as they contain memories and stories of the old.

Materials:

◇ the Internet; some useful websites:

www.wikipedia.com

<http://www.emilycarr.ca/>

Each artist can be Googled individually

◇ art books on individual artists

◇ Artist Quotes

◇ large sheets of white paper, pencil crayons

Process:

1. Discuss the artists mentioned above and make sure students know a little about them. Background information on each artist can be found on pages 7–9.
2. Give students copies of the artists' quotes—see following page.
3. In small groups ask students to read and discuss:
 - What is important to each artist?
 - What do they want to show in their art?
 - Does the artist want to persuade people, change opinions or suggest new ideas?
 - What do students think the artists' work would look like?
 - Have students look at images of each artist's work—they are easily available on the Internet. Did they expect the work to look like this?
4. Ask students to write down—individually—something they consider an important issue they would like to make an artwork about. It could be one of the following:
 - something they would like to change in their world
 - something that offers an alternative view to the mainstream
 - a piece of cultural information they feel is misunderstood
 - a political viewpoint

5. Once students have an idea they would like to work with, have them consider:
 - How could they express this idea visually?
 - What materials would they use? Collage? Sculpture? Poster?
 - Why would they choose this particular process?
 - Who would they want this message or artwork to reach? Students? Commuters? Farmers?
6. Ask students to create a sketch or design for an artwork. Think big and imaginatively. The design could be for a 2D or 3D artwork, large or small.
7. Use pencil crayons to sketch it out on a large sheet of white paper. Make notes on the sketch explaining materials, size, colours, etc.
8. Have students share their ideas and explain their sketches to the class.

Conclusion:

Discuss:

- What are some similarities and differences between students' ideas?
- Can art make a real difference in people's lives?
- Does it have the power to change the way people see and do things?
- Have any of these designs made the students think about something in a new way? How? What?

Artist Quotes

Diego Rivera

"I've never believed in religion, but I believe in Picasso."

"An artist is above all a human being, profoundly human to the core. If the artist can't feel everything that humanity feels, if the artist isn't capable of loving until he forgets himself and sacrifices himself if necessary, if he won't put down his magic brush and head the fight against the oppressor, then he isn't a great artist."

Dana Claxton

"I've had a very multi-layered life. And it's all those experiences that go into the work."

"In looking at the history of my mother and grandmother, I found all this material about Canada's history of racial apartheid, and how the church and the government were implicated. It makes you think about Canadian identity."

"I also have an interest in fashion and glamour, and purposely wanted to make Indian people glamorous."

Robert Davidson

"The role of the artist, I feel, is a historian."

"I feel that in sharing my insights and my experience it actually gets me more depth in what I'm doing today. I feel more confident and more comfortable in talking about it because of those design workshops and apprenticeships. They go beyond just doing it like this or carving it like that, it's really about cultural knowledge."

Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun

"Painting is a form of political activism, a way to exercise my inherent right, my right to authority, my freedom. This is real freedom for me. I am proud these days; I have self-dignity in my art when I paint this world."

"Always, I create art to communicate with others, to let other cultures see things for themselves. To show my world, Indian world, to show that we do have a spirit, a place to go to, so people will understand who I am as a West Coast Native person."

Brian Jungen

"My mother's family would use objects in a way that weren't originally intended, a kind of improvisational recycling that was born out of both practical and economic necessity. Witnessing that resourcefulness continues to exert a deep influence on how I relate to the world as an artist."

"It was interesting to see how by simply manipulating the Air Jordan shoes you could evoke specific cultural traditions whilst simultaneously amplifying the process of cultural corruption and assimilation."

Vocabulary

abstract: a style of art that can be thought of in two ways:

- a) the artist begins with a recognizable subject and alters, distorts, manipulates or simplifies elements of it;
- b) the artist creates purely abstract forms that are unrecognizable and have no direct reference to external reality (also called non-representational art).

conceptual art: art in which the ideas behind the work are seen as more significant than the end product. During the 1960s and '70s, conceptual artists rejected the idea of the unique, precious art object and focused on the importance of ideas to artistic practice.

contemporary: created in the last thirty years. Most contemporary artists are living artists. Challenging traditional boundaries, many contemporary artists use a limitless range of materials and ideas to reflect, explore and comment on today's world.

fresco: a wall painting technique in which pigments are applied to wet plaster. Colours penetrate the plaster and are extremely long-lasting. Used in Roman times and by Renaissance painters.

installation: art that is created from a wide range of materials and installed in a specific environment. An installation may be temporary or permanent. The term came into wide use in the 1970s, and many installation works were conceptual.

landscape: artwork in which the subject is a view of the exterior physical world. Traditionally, landscapes have been paintings or drawings depicting natural scenes and are often concerned with light, space and setting.

modern: a historical period of art practice—from 1850 to 1970—during which approaches to art embraced new ideas in science, political thought and many other areas. The modernists rejected the restrictions of past art traditions and stressed innovation over all other criteria.

mural: a painting or other work of art executed directly on a wall.

performance art: a work in any of a variety of media that is performed before a live audience. The performance itself, rather than a specific object, constitutes the artwork. Documentation is often an important part of the performance.

portrait: artwork in which the artist's principal goal is to capture the physical likeness and personality of an individual or group of people.

Post-Impressionism: a term that refers to the art that followed Impressionism, rather than a cohesive artistic style or movement. For the most part, the artists used vivid colours, thick paint, strong brushstrokes and everyday subject matter. Some included distortions and arbitrary colour, and emphasized geometric forms.

social realism: a style of art that draws attention to the everyday conditions of the working classes, and is critical of the social structures that maintain these conditions. Usually depicts working-class activities as heroic.

Resources

Print:

- Augaitis, Daina, et al. *Brian Jungen*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2005.
- Bennett, Bryan. *Discovering Canadian Art: Learning the Language*. Toronto: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1984.
- Carr, Emily. *Beloved Land: The World of Emily Carr*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1996.
- Craven, David. *Art and Revolution in Latin America, 1910–1990*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Hill, Charles, et al. *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon*. Vancouver/Ottawa: Douglas & McIntyre/National Gallery of Canada/Vancouver Art Gallery, 2006.
- Laurence, Robin. *Beloved Land: The World of Emily Carr*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1996.
- Macnair, Peter, et al. *Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast*. Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1998.
- Murray, Joan. *Canadian Art in the Twentieth Century*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1999.
- Rhodes, Richard. *A First Book of Canadian Art*. Toronto: Owl Books, 2001.
- Rivera, Diego, with Gladys March. *My Life: An Autobiography*. Dover Publications, 1992.
- Rochfort, Desmond. *Mexican Muralists: Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998.
- Smith, Annie. *Getting Into Art History*. Toronto: Barn Press, 1993.
- Stallabrass, Julian. *Contemporary Art: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Steltzer, Ulli, and Robert Davidson. *Eagle Transforming: the Art of Robert Davidson*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1994.
- Thom, Ian. *Art BC: Masterworks from British Columbia*. Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery and Douglas & McIntyre, 2001.

Online:

www.artcyclopedia.com

Online art encyclopedia, listing international artists, and museums and galleries with collections of their work.

www.wikipedia.com

Online dictionary and encyclopedia, created collaboratively by laypeople.

<http://cwahi.concordia.ca/>

Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, a newly founded collaborative that brings resources and researchers together to enhance scholarship on historical women artists in Canada.

www.cybermuse.gallery.ca

Canadian Art Education and research site featuring artists' images and educational materials.

<http://www.nativeonline.com>

Website featuring an extensive profile on First Nations artists and descriptions of artwork, a resource site for First Nations Arts in Canada.

Additional information can be found by Googling individual artists.

BCTF Teaching Aids:

Clark, Karin. *Long Ago in Victoria (K–2)*. BCTF Teaching Aid 3107, 1996.

Gage, Susan. *TRFic! A Temperate Rainforest Teacher's Guidebook (intermediate)*, BCTF Teaching Aid 9533, 1998.

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